THE

VOICE OF PROPHECY;

OR,

Prophecy Fulfilled and Unfulfilled:

BEING THE

EXTENDED NOTES OF TWO SERMONS

DELIVERED IN

ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL, LONDON, C. W.,

ON ADVENT SUNDAY, DEC. 2ND, 1860,

BY THE REV. JOHN McLEAN, M. A.,

CURATE OF THE CATHEDRAL.

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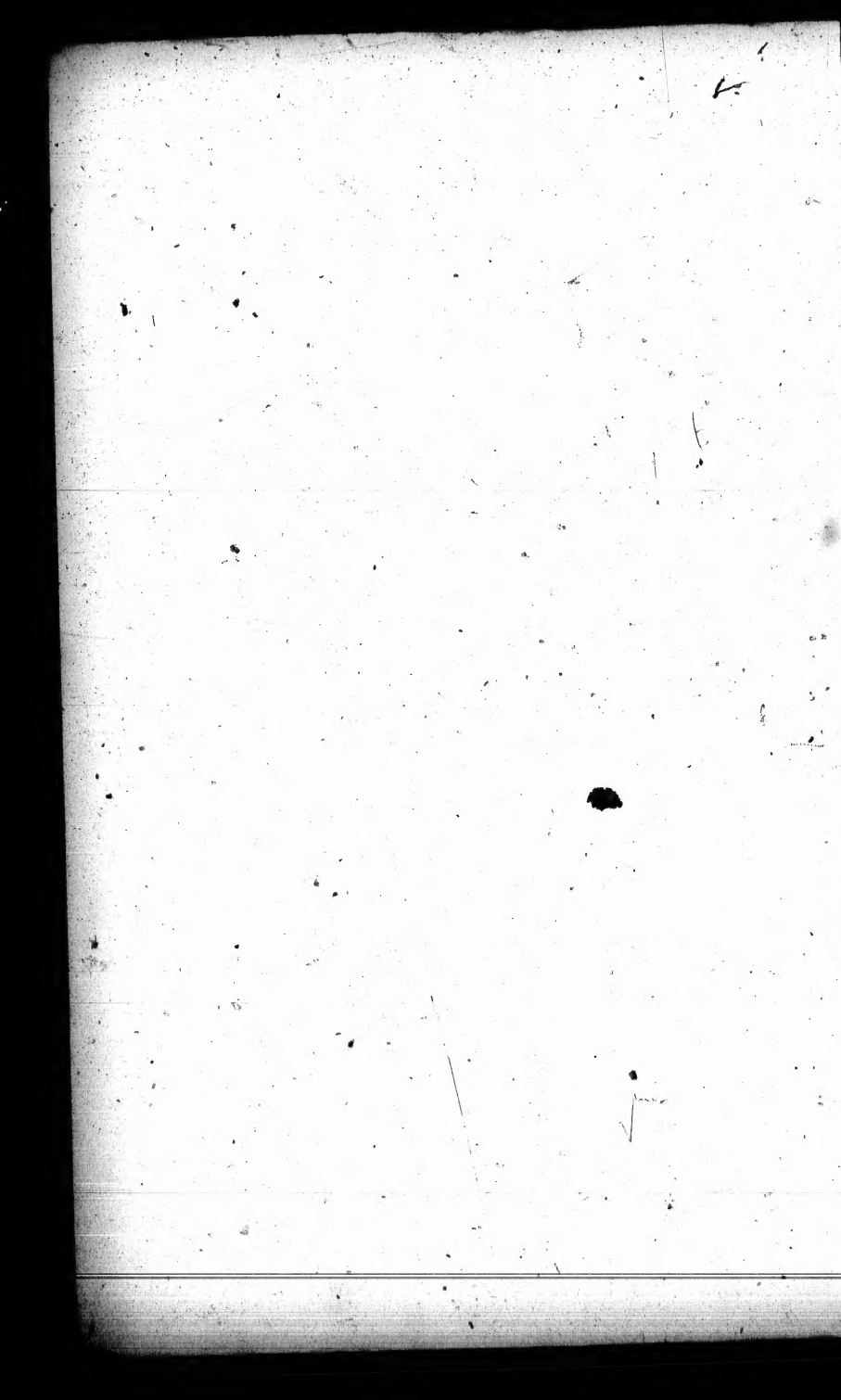


PREFACE.

The following Sermons were delivered, in a less extended form, in St. Paul's Cathedral, on Advent Sunday. They contain the leading points of my recent course of Wednesday Evening Lectures, on the Book of Revelation, and are published in compliance with a request contained in the following letter, addressed to me, by a number of members of the congregation :—

"We, as well as very many others of the congregation of St. Paul's Cathedral, being much impressed with the great importance of the subject of your able sermons on Advent Sunday, upon the second coming of Christ and the millennium, are most desirous that the same should be printed and published. We feel that so sacred and solemn a subject requires our most serious attention, and it is with the view of being able to study and reflect upon matters so closely affecting our future state that we now prefer this request, to which we hope you will accede."

I may mention that the gentlemen who interested themselves in the matter kindly subscribed for about two hundred and fifty copies before the manuscript went to press. I can only offer them my cordial thanks, and it is my earnest prayer that the consideration of the subject may be blessed by the Holy Spirit, both to them, and to all others whom the publication may reach.

J. McL.

London, C. W., December, 1860.

THE VOICE OF PROPHECY.

Part I.

PROPHECY FULFILLED.

"Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein; for the time is at hand."—REVELATIONS, i. 3.

"All Scripture," says the Apostle, "is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." Now, as the Book of Revelation is part of Scripture, and as there is no exception made to this declaration as to the study of *any* part of God's Word being destitute of profit, it follows that the same obligation rests upon us to make it the subject of our earnest and prayerful study, as any other part of the Divine oracles. There is no doubt that for a very long period in the history of the church, little or no attempt was made to interpret the prophecies contained in the Apocalypse, by applying the symbols used to the events that were taking place in the world. The public teachers of Christianity carefully avoided all allusion to the contents of the book, and by the mass of professing Christians it came to be regarded as a part of God's Word from which no instruction was to be derived. But a great change has since taken place in the estimation in which this prophetical part of Scripture is held. Many earnest-minded Christians have turned their attention to its study, and, bringing to bear upon it a vast amount of talent, learning and historical knowledge, have succeeded in giving a clear and pointed interpretation to by far the greater part of the prophecies contained in the whole work. That the Spirit of God intends the prophecies to be carefully studied is manifest, not only from the words of our text, but from various other parts of the Book—take, for instance, the indications of the character of Antichrist given in the 13th chapter. You will there find many things mentioned that would seem to point undoubtedly to the Papacy, but, as if to make assurance doubly sure, and also to encourage the students of prophecy to persevere until they had found a complete and satisfactory solution of the problem, the following verse is added:—"Here is

wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast; for it is the number of a man; and his number is six hundred three score and six."

Here you have the Spirit of God not only permitting, but positively commanding us to attempt defining who Antichrist is, and giving us, at the same time, every reason to hope that a diligent search will end in our being successful. I need not say that several solutions of this problem have been proposed, all marked by more or less ingenuity. You are aware that in the Greek and Latin languages they made use of the letters of the alphabet to indicate numerical values, instead of figures, as is our custom, and it is therefore plain that the name of Antichrist must be made up of a certain number of letters, whose united numerical value is 666. Now, the Greek word *Lateinos*, signifying *Latin man*, answers this condition exactly; for if you sum up the numerical value of its letters, you have that number as the result. Need we say how accurately the title of *Latin man* applies to the head of the Papacy! You know that his seat is the capital of the Roman or Latin Empire. The whole service of his church is conducted in Latin; the decrees of his councils, and his own famous bulls, are written in Latin; while the very blessings that he invokes upon the heads of some of his people, and the curses that he launches against others, are conveyed in the same language.

We believe this to be the real solution, simply because the Papacy answers, in all the details of its character, not only to the description given of Antichrist in this part of Revelation, but also in other parts of the Word of God; as, for instance, in 2nd Thessalonians, chap. ii. verses 3 to 11.

We shall now go on to consider some of the leading points of the prophecy referred to in the words of our text, "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy." The words refer clearly to the whole Book of Revelation, considered as a continued series of predictions relating to events that were to occur in the world from the period when St. John wrote in the Isle of Patmos up to that of the second advent of Christ, the resurrection of the dead, and the day of judgment. Our discourse will therefore naturally divide itself into two distinct parts. We have, first, to consider the series of predictions that can be shown to have already received their fulfilment, and then to gather from the Word of God whatever information it gives that will tend to throw light upon those coming events in which we have all so vital an interest.

Now, with reference to the first point, I shall of course only attempt to give a general outline both of the prophecies and their fulfilment. We have, as many of you are aware, been engaged at the Wednesday Evening Lectures for

some months past in bringing out the details of each particular case; and, as this is Advent Sunday—a day on which our Church especially directs our attention to the circumstances attending the close of the present dispensation, and the second advent of Christ—subjects that form the culminating point of the whole of the prophecies contained in the Book of Revelation—we believe that a general outline of the contents of the book will tend both to give instruction, and to deepen the impressions that so solemn a subject as the second advent is fitted to produce upon the mind.

The symbols employed in the vision are, as you will remember, the seven seals of a book that was held in the hand of Him that sat upon the throne. It is the opening of the seals in succession that forms the signal for the introduction of the various visions recorded by St. John—and you will observe something very remarkable in their order. The first six seals are broken, on which six separate visions appear; on the breaking of the seventh seal, instead of one vision, we have preparation made for seven in succession, to be introduced by the sounding of as many trumpets. The trumpets sound, and the same peculiarity appears in the arrangement of the visions they introduce: the sounding of the first six indicate as many distinct appearances to the seer, but the sounding of the seventh introduces seven angels, each holding a vial containing the wrath of God, which is to be poured out upon the world. You will thus observe that there are in all twenty-one symbols used, each one marking some particular event of great importance taking place in the world.

In the opening of the first four seals there is a remarkable similarity in the symbols. In all of them a rider is seen mounted upon a horse—the color of the horse being different in each case. Now, it is a well-known fact that, both in ancient and modern times, nations are represented by symbols. Thus England is represented by the "Lion"—and from the bravery and generous character of her sons, she well deserves the symbol—she is also represented by the "Rose"; while Ireland is known by the "Shamrock," and Scotland by the "Thistle." So, in ancient times, the horse was used as a symbol of the Roman Empire, and as this animal was held to be consecrated to Mars, the god of battles, you will at once see the appropriateness of the symbol to that warlike empire.

The opening of the first seal is thus described, chap. vi. 2:—"And I saw, and behold a white horse, and he that sat upon him had a bow, and a crown was given unto him, and he went forth conquering and to conquer." We would at once infer from this representation that a period of triumph and prosperity was pointed to. Accordingly, on consulting history, we find that from the year 96, A.D., when St. John wrote the Apocalypse, up to A.D., 180, the Roman

Empire enjoyed a season of uninterrupted prosperity. The celebrated historian Gibbon, in the first chap. of his "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," says: "In the second century of the Christian era, the Empire of Rome comprehended the fairest part of the earth, and the most civilized portion of mankind. During a happy period of more than fourscore years the public administration was conducted by the virtue and abilities of Nerva, Trojan, Adrian, and the two Antonines. It is the design of this and the two succeeding chapters to describe the prosperous condition of their empire, and afterwards, from the death of Marcus Antominus, to deduce the most important circumstances of its decline and fall; a revolution that will ever be remembered, and is still felt by the nations of the earth."

We now come to the opening of the second seal. It is described thus, chap. vi. 4: "And there went out another horse that was red; and power was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another; and there was given unto him a great sword." Mark here the *red* color of the horse—the color of *blood*—a sword is given to the rider, and power to take away peace and to kill. What better symbol could we have of a state of war and bloodshed? Accordingly, on consulting profane history, we find that the Roman Empire was desolated by a series of bloody civil wars, commencing with the murder of the Emperor Commodus, in the year 193, and continuing, with scarcely any intermission, for 80 or 90 years. See Gibbon's "Decline and Fall," vol. i., chaps. 5, 6, 7, Milman's edition, New York.

Then comes the third seal—chap. vi. 5, 6—"I beheld, and lo, a black horse, and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand. And I heard a voice in the midst of the four beasts say, A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny, and see thou hurt not the oil and the wine." This well represents the heavy burdens imposed upon the Empire, especially during the reign of Caracalla. I refer you again to the words of Gibbon (page 194, vol. i.). "Instead of a twentieth, he exacted a tenth of all legacies and inheritances, and during his reign (for the ancient proportion was restored after his death) he crushed alike every part of the Empire under the weight of his iron sceptre;" and farther on he says: "In the course of this history we shall be too often summoned to explain the land tax, the capitation, and the heavy contributions of corn, wine, oil and meat, which were exacted from the provinces for the use of the court, the army and the capital."

The fourth seal is now opened—chap. vi. 7, 8—"And behold, a pale

horse; and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth."—Hell, or "Hades," here means the abode of the dead—and in the whole symbol you have a powerful description of the misfortunes that befel the Roman Empire in the third century. Death and the grave, and the power to kill with the sword, vividly depicts the slaughter occasioned by the first eruption of the Goths. "The Emperor Decius," says Gibbon, "had employed a few months in the work of peace and the administration of justice, when he was summoned to the banks of the Danube by the invasion of the Goths.—This is the first considerable occasion in which history mentions that great people, who afterwards broke the Roman power, sacked the Capitol, and reigned in Gaul, Spain and Italy. So memorable was the part which they acted in the subversion of the Western Empire, that the name of Goths is frequently but improperly used as a general appellation of rude and warlike barbarism." ("Decline and Fall," vol. i. page 281.) Within the same period of time (A.D. 248 to 265) we find, by reference to the same author, that the "killing with sword and with hunger and with death," alluded to in the vision, received a most remarkable fulfilment. In pages 328 and 329 of vol. i., he says: "Our habits of thinking so fondly connect the order of the universe with the fate of man, that this gloomy period of history has been decorated with inundations, earthquakes, uncommon meteors, preternatural darkness, and a crowd of prodigies, fictitious or exaggerated. But a long and general famine was a calamity of a more serious kind. It was the inevitable consequence of rapine and oppression which extirpated the produce of the present and the hope of future harvests. Famine is almost always followed by epidemical diseases, the effect of scanty and unwholesome food. Other causes must, however, have contributed to the furious plague, which, from the year 250 to the year 265, raged without interruption in every province, every city, and almost every family of the Roman Empire. During some time, five thousand persons died daily in Rome; and many towns that had escaped the hands of the barbarians were entirely depopulated." He also states, in page 329—"Applying this authentic fact (alluding to the figures of a register) to the most correct tables of mortality, it evidently proves that above half the people of Alexandria had perished, and could we venture to extend the analogy to the other provinces, we might suspect that war, pestilence and famine, had consumed, in a few years, the moiety of the human species."

Now, remember that Gibbon was the enemy and not the friend of the Christian religion, and cannot therefore be suspected of writing in such a way as

to favor the interpretation of the prophecies; and yet, if you compare the prophecy in question with the above remarks, you must at once see the exactness with which the "killing with sword, and with hunger, and with death," was carried out in the actual experience of the Roman Empire.

The opening of the fifth seal is thus described—chap. vi. 9–11—"And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the Word of God, and for the testimony which they held: and they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? And white robes were given unto every one of them, and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow-servants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled." History points to a terrible fulfilment of this part of the vision. You have all, no doubt, read of the persecution of the Christians by the Pagan emperors, and more especially the last and most violent of all — that under Diocletian. The most fearful tortures were applied to the unfortunate Christians who fell into the hands of their enemies; some were scourged with merciless severity, others were stretched upon the rack, roasted over slow fires, or laid in red hot beds of iron until death put a period to their sufferings, while some were torn in pieces by wild beasts.

The sixth seal is now opened—chap. vi. 12–17—"And lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; and the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind. And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every freeman, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; and said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; for the great day of His wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?" If we keep in view that about the time answering in the order of events to the opening of this seal, the enormous hordes of Goths and Vandals were pouring down from the north to concentrate themselves on the borders of the Roman empire, preparatory to the incursions that finally sealed its ruin, we will have no difficulty in seeing the appropriateness of the symbols used to denote the terror and dismay of the civilized world. The number of these barbarians was in reality great, but report would magnify it to countless thousands; their bravery, their ferocity and determined character, the un-

known regions from whence they had issued on their mission of conquest and plunder, would all tend to strike terror both into those who ruled and those who were governed among the nations they attacked. It is also worthy of remark that about this period the greater part of the Roman world was shaken by a violent earthquake, which struck terror into the hearts of the people, and induced a general belief that not only was the empire on the verge of ruin, but that the world itself was about to be destroyed.

We now come to the opening of the seventh seal—chap. viii. Seven trumpets were given to as many angels, and the sounding of each trumpet introduced a separate vision. "The first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth; and the third part of trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up." Here you have symbols plainly denoting the bloodshed and devastation of war; and we believe that the Gothic invasion of Italy under the far-famed Alaric, produced results so disastrous to the empire as to be well represented by the vision.—The words of Gibbon would almost seem to be a commentary upon the expressions, "hail and fire mingled with blood." In page 192, vol. iii. he says: "The troops which had been posted to defend the Straits of Thermopylæ, retired, as they were directed, without attempting to disturb the secure and rapid passage of Alaric; and the fertile fields of Phocis and Bœotia were instantly covered by a deluge of barbarians who massacred the males of an age to bear arms, and drove away the beautiful females with the spoil and cattle of the flaming villages. The travellers who visited Greece several years afterward[8] could easily discover the deep and bloody traces of the march of the Goths." The second angel now sounds, "And as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea, and the third part of the sea became blood. And the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, and had life, died; and the third part of the ships were destroyed." Here we have another emblem of war and bloodshed; and it is remarkable that while the symbols under the first trumpet point to desolation upon the land, those that followed the sounding of the second seem to point more directly to disasters upon the sea. Now, on reference to history, we find that the next great invasion of the barbarians that shook the Roman empire after that of Alaric, was the one conducted by Genseric, at the head of the Vandals; and it is remarkable that this leader assailed the Roman power chiefly *by sea*. In the spring of each year he equipped a fleet in the port of Carthage, and it is said that on one occasion his pilot asked him, before sailing, what course he should steer. "Leave the determination to the winds," replied Genseric, "they will transport us to the guilty coast whose inhabitants have provoked the Divine justice." The

sounding of the third trumpet introduces a new set of symbols. "There fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon a third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters. And the name of the star is called Wormwood; and the third part of the waters became wormwood, and many men died of the waters because they were made bitter." The same principle of interpretation we have already pursued will enable us to fix upon Attila, king of the Huns, as the scourge here indicated. His ravages in the Roman empire were next to those of Genseric. You will observe that the effect of the judgment indicated in the vision was felt on the "rivers and fountains of waters." This is well explained by the fact that the principal operations of Attila were confined to the regions of the Alps, and those portions of the empire from which the rivers flow down into Italy. It may be useful to quote a remark of Mr. Gibbon's with reference to the effect of Attila's invasion. He says: "In the reign of Attila, the Huns again became the terror of the world, and I shall now describe the character and actions of that formidable barbarian, who alternately insulted and invaded the east and the west, and urged the rapid downfall of the Roman empire" (page 386, vol. iii.). The sounding of the fourth trumpet now takes place: "And the third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars, so as the third part of them was darkened, and the day shone not for a third part of it, and the night likewise." The explanation of this is easy, if we admit that of the three preceding visions. The Roman empire sustained a fourth invasion of barbarians under Odoacer, who finally became king of Italy, and put an end to the Roman dominion in the west. You will thus observe that the first four trumpets introduce as many distinct and fearful visions, indicating woe and desolation to the Roman empire—the last one, the darkening of the sun, moon and stars, well representing its final overthrow; and on consulting history for an explanation of these terrible signs, we find that the empire actually descended through four successive stages of disaster, caused by the invasion of Alaric, Genseric, Attila and Odoacer, until its destiny of final ruin was effected by the last of these barbarians ascending the throne of Italy as king.

The fifth angel now sounded—chap. ix. 1:—"And I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth, and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit." The 2nd and 3rd verses state that smoke arose from this pit when opened, and out of the smoke a flight of locusts; the 4th, 5th and 6th verses describe the mission of the locusts—to torment men for five months, but not to hurt vegetation; while the 7th to 10th verses describe their appearance as horses prepared for battle, &c. No symbols could possibly

be chosen that would better describe the nature of that fearful scourge that desolated Christendom in the shape of the hordes of Saracens that issued from the desert in the year 629. The star falling from heaven, and possessing the key of the bottomless pit, finds its application in Mahomet their leader, and author of the famous system of imposture that may well be described as having its origin in the abode of evil spirits. The description of the locusts agrees well with the appearance of the Saracen horsemen, while the period of five months, during which they were to torment men, is explained by remembering that a day in prophecy represents a literal year—thus giving 5 times 30 prophetic days, or 150 literal years, as the duration of their power to oppress the nations they attacked; and an appeal to history will show that about the year 779—that is, 150 years after the beginning of their conquests—the Saracens lost their warlike character, and gave themselves up to the study of literature and the indulgence of luxurious habits, thus ceasing to be formidable to those they had once subdued. (See Gibbon, vol. v., chap. 52.) It is remarkable that the part of the vision that relates to sparing the grass, &c., finds its application in an order of the Caliph Aboubeker to the Saracens: "Let not the victory be stained with the blood of women and children. Destroy no palm-trees, nor burn any fields of corn. Cut down no fruit trees, nor do any mischief to cattle, only such as you kill to eat."

The sound of the sixth trumpet now prepares St. John for a new vision—"And I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God, saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet, Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates. And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men" (chap. ix., 13–15). Then follows a description of a great army of horsemen, the chief points in it being that men were killed by "fire, and smoke, and brimstone" issuing from the mouths of the horses, and that the power of the horses lay in their tails.

Following the course of history, there will be no difficulty in finding the fulfilment of this vision in the inroad of the Turks. They had their origin near the Caspian, and having conquered Bagdad, their leader—the famous Togrul—was constituted temporal lieutenant of the Vicar of Mahomet, and thus the union of the Turkish power with that of the Caliph, laid the foundation of a formidable kingdom of religious fanatics in the neighborhood of the river Euphrates. "The four angels on the great river Euphrates" were therefore "loosed" when the Turks crossed that river on their march of conquest towards the west, which they did in the year 1062; and after nearly 400 years of constant warfare with Christendom, they gained

their crowning success, by the capture of Constantinople, the seat of Empire, in the year 1453. Now, mark the period assigned in the vision, as the duration of their attack: "An hour, and a day, and a month, and a year." You have seen in the calculations made regarding time in various other prophecies, that the prophetic month is taken at 30 days—that is, literal years. We have, therefore, 13 prophetic months, a prophetic day, and a prophetic hour, equal to 391 literal years, and about 15 days, which, with the exception of the 15 days, is exactly the period that elapsed between the year 1062, when the Turks crossed the Euphrates, and the year 1453, when they completed their conquest by the taking of Constantinople. The next point for explanation is the representation of men being killed by "fire, smoke, and brimstone," issuing from the mouths of the horses. Let us keep in view that the use of gunpowder had not been long discovered at the period to which we allude, and that the Turks gained much of their success in battle by availing themselves of so powerful an auxiliary. You have only to imagine a body of their horsemen advancing to the attack with pistols levelled at the enemy, and you will at once see that the discharge of their weapons would present an appearance as if "fire, smoke, and brimstone" issued from the mouths of the horses. The power of the horses being in their tails is easily explained, when we know that the tail of the horse was adopted as the banner of the Turkish army. It is said that one of their generals rallied his army, when thrown into confusion through the loss of its standards, by cutting off his horse's tail, and fixing it on the end of his spear as a rallying point to the flying soldiers. The latter, on seeing this proof of determination on the part of their general, felt ashamed of their own want of courage, and returning to the charge with renewed vigor, gained a complete victory. Even the rank of the Pashas has since that time been indicated by the same symbol—one who carries two tails on his standard being of higher rank than he who carries one, and he who carries three being the highest of all.

This brief sketch has now brought us to about the close of the 15th century. An interval occurs between the events which followed the sounding of the sixth trumpet and the pouring out of the first vial under the seventh. The 10th chapter is devoted to an account of the vision of a mighty angel, "who came down from heaven, clothed with a cloud, and a rainbow was upon his head, and his face was as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire; and he had in his hand a little book open." In the 10th verse, speaking of this book, St. John says: "And I took the little book out of the angel's hand, and ate it up; and it was in my mouth sweet as honey, and as soon as I had eaten it my belly was bitter. And he said unto me, Thou must prophesy

again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings." The question for us now to consider is, what great event took place in the history of the world about the close of the 15th, or beginning of the 16th century, that could fairly be pointed to as the fulfilment of this vision. We reply, without hesitation, "The Reformation." The angel holding an open book in his hand clearly symbolises the Reformers who translated the Bible, and distributed it among the people. Up to that period the Word of God was practically unknown among the great mass of mankind, even within the bounds of Christendom; and we hesitate not to assert that the opening of the Bible—that is, its translation and dissemination among the people—has produced the greatest and most lasting revolution that we read of in the history of our race.

The eleventh chapter is devoted to the description of the "two witnesses" who were to prophesy for a thousand two hundred and three score days clothed in sackcloth. We showed you in the course of our lectures that the two witnesses were two lines of confessors of the truth—one in the east and one in the west—who dissented from the errors of the Church of Rome throughout the whole period of her supremacy. The thousand two hundred and three score days are prophetic days, and indicate literal years, that is, from A. D. 532, when Justinian acknowledged the Pope as head of the Church, to A. D. 1792, the date of the French Revolution, during which the Papal power received a fatal blow that it has never recovered, and which has been succeeded by other assaults that have already brought it to the very verge of ruin. The twelfth chapter, under the figure of a woman pursued into the wilderness by a dragon, represents the Church of Christ during the period of Papal persecution; and you will observe, in the 6th verse, that the same period is marked for her trials as for that of the two witnesses—"And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and three score days;" that is, during the 1260 years of Papal supremacy. The thirteenth chapter describes the Papacy under the form of a beast with seven heads and ten horns, the 5th verse limiting the duration of his power to forty-two months, that is, 1260 prophetic days, or literal years, which agrees with the periods allotted to the two witnesses and the church in the wilderness.

We now pass on to the pouring out of the vials under the seventh seal.—The first vial is poured out (chap. xvi. 2)—"And there fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and upon them which worshipped his image." Following the order of historical events, we find an ample fulfilment of this part of the vision in the horrors of the French Revolution at the close of the last century. France may well be said to have

"worshipped the beast," seeing that to that country, in the time of Pepin and Charlemagne, the Papacy owed the foundation of its temporal power, while the King of France has long been styled by the Pope himself, "The eldest son of the Church." The scenes of bloodshed that were enacted in that unfortunate country, during the "Reign of Terror," afford a striking explanation of the "noisome and grievous sore" that fell on those who had "the mark of the beast."

We now come to the pouring out of the second vial, chap. xvi. 3—"And the second angel poured out his vial upon the sea, and it became as the blood of a dead man, and every living soul died in the sea." War and bloodshed are clearly denoted by this vision, and it is evident that a series of bloody naval engagements would answer best to the symbols employed. You will remember that it was on the sea that France sustained such signal reverses during the period when she was most successful by land. From 1793 to 1815, these naval battles followed each other in rapid succession in different parts of the globe, so that it has been well said that the whole history of the world does not present such a picture of naval war, destruction and bloodshed.

The effect of the third vial is thus described in verses 4–6: "And the third angel poured out his vial upon the rivers and fountains of waters, and they became blood. And I heard the angel of the waters say, Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, and shalt be, because thou hast judged thus; for they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink, for they are worthy." There are two things we might easily infer from this description, by applying the same principles of interpretation that have been employed in the case of the preceding vials: the first is, that war and bloodshed are indicated in a land remarkable for its lakes and rivers; and the second, that the land in question had been the scene of persecution directed against the people of God. You will find that Italy answers to both these conditions. No country could so appropriately be described as a land of "rivers and fountains" as Northern Italy, abounding, as it does, with springs, and fountains, and streams; while, during the worst period of Papal tyranny, the valleys of Piedmont flowed with the blood of God's saints.—This very country, by the just judgment of God, was made the scene of war and bloodshed during the troubled period that succeeded the French Revolution; and, speaking of the valleys of Piedmont, an able commentator remarks: "In the times of Papal persecution, these valleys had been made to flow with the blood of the saints, and it *seemed* at least to be a righteous retribution that these desolations of war, these conflagrations, and these scenes of carnage, should occur in that very land, and that the very fountains and

streams, which had before been turned into blood by the slaughter of the friends of the Saviour, should now be reddened with the blood of men slain in battle."

The pouring out of the fourth vial upon the sun (ver. 8), followed by the scorching of men with heat, may well be said to point to the desolating wars of Europe that immediately succeeded the invasion of Northern Italy.

The pouring out of the fifth vial is followed by a vision that finds a clear and remarkable fulfilment (verse 10)—"And the fifth angel poured out his vial upon the seat of the beast, and his kingdom was full of darkness, and they gnawed their tongues for pain." The seat of the beast we understand to be Rome, the centre of the Papal power; and you are aware that one result of the French Revolution was the attack and capture of that city in the year 1799, by a French army under General Berthier. The Pope was taken prisoner, and died soon after in consequence of the cruelties and indignities heaped upon him by his enemies. Alison, in his "History of Europe," says: "But long before the Pope had sunk under the persecution of his oppressors, Rome had experienced the bitter fruits of republican fraternization. Immediately after the entry of the French troops commenced the regular and systematic pillage of the city. Not only the churches and the convents, but the palaces of the cardinals and of the nobility, were laid waste. * * * * * The Vatican was stripped to its naked walls. * * * * * A contribution of four millions in money, two millions in provisions, and three thousand horses, was imposed on a city already exhausted by the enormous exactions it had previously undergone. Under the direction of the infamous commissary, Haller, the domestic library, museum, furniture, jewels, and even the private clothes of the Pope were sold. * * * * * At the same time, the simple territorial possessions of the church and the monasteries were confiscated, and declared national property; a measure which, by drying up at once the whole resources of the affluent classes, precipitated into the extreme of misery the numerous poor who were maintained by their expenditure, or fed by their bounty."

Enough has, I think, been said to prove to every unprejudiced mind that the symbols employed under the fifth vial, were not any stronger than the terrible reality. Rome was reduced to the lowest stage of adversity by the judgments sent upon her at the period to which we refer; but, in the language of the seer, her people "repented not of their deeds." A final and more terrible judgment has yet to come upon her, and the times in which we ourselves are living seem to afford ample ground for believing that the period of that judgment is not very far distant.

The sixth angel now pours out his vial "upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared." You have already seen how the Turkish power is symbolized by the river Euphrates in the sounding of the sixth trumpet, and the drying up of that river will therefore plainly indicate the gradual decay of the power in question. Now, we have only to glance at the history of Turkey during the last forty years, to be convinced that her existence as a separate state is steadily drawing to a close. From the date of the Greek insurrection, in 1821, she has lost one portion of territory after another. The battle of Navarino, in 1827, crushed her naval power; the war with Russia, in 1854, although it threw a temporary lustre over her arms by the victories of Omar Pasha on the Danube, and resulted in the final defeat of her enemies in the Crimea, has only served to make her inherent weakness more generally known, and to excite a wide-spread conviction that she must soon cease to exist as an independent empire. While lecturing on this subject, I read to you an able article from the English *Times*, in which the writer showed that the empire must soon break up, in consequence of its present hopeless state of bankruptcy rendering it impossible to continue paying the army and public functionaries, even were there no other causes at work to hasten its dissolution.

Let us now glance at the opening of the seventh vial—the last of the symbols mentioned in the vision. There is every reason to believe that the very period in which we live—or, at least, one not far distant—is indicated here, more especially in the following words (ver. 19): "And great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of His wrath." I do not stop to bring forward the well-known reasons why almost every Protestant commentator fixes the Romish Apostacy as the only possible interpretation of the mystic Babylon. The 17th and 18th chapters of this book are devoted to giving a detailed account of her punishment and final overthrow. Need I remind you that events are now occurring which point to the speedy and total ruin of the Papal power. The struggle for independence in Italy—that land so long down-trodden by despotism—has been already, in a great measure, successful. The subjects of the Pope detest his rule, and only wait for the removal of his foreign supporters to cast off the yoke of his tyranny, and expel him from Rome. And when we look abroad on the general aspect of the political world, we see nothing but the mustering of armies, and preparations made on the most gigantic scale for war between the nations of Europe; and we have every reason to believe that in the midst of the contest both the Turkish and Papal powers will receive their death-blow, and the prophecy will then be completely fulfilled.

We now pass on to the second division of our subject—the consideration of

some of the leading future events that are disclosed in the Book of Revelation. These embrace the restoration of the Jews; the circumstances attending the Second Advent; the first Resurrection, or resurrection of the Saints; the millennium period of a thousand years; the final struggle of Satan—and the general winding up of the affairs of the world at the day of judgment. Time will only permit us to allude to one or two of these topics at present; the remainder we shall reserve as a subject of discourse for the evening.

First, then, with regard to the restoration of the Jews. You will at once admit that the way in which this remarkable people have been kept for so many centuries distinct and separate from every other nation is nothing short of a miracle of Divine power. They have been dispersed among all nations; they are found amid the snows of Siberia, and treading the burning sands of Africa, in the extreme East, and the remotest West; in large cities often ranking among merchant princes—mingling amongst races of every shade of color, and every description of character, and yet preserving those qualities and habits that mark them as the people that were once peculiarly favored by God, though they have been long cast off for their sins. But they are not cast off for ever. There are not a few distinct promises in the Word of God that point to their coming restoration to the land inherited by their fathers.—In the 43rd chapter of Isaiah, we find the Lord addressing His people, through the mouth of the prophet, in the following language: "Fear not, for I am with thee; I will bring thy seed from the East, and gather thee from the West; I will say to the North, Give up; and to the South, Keep not back; bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth." What language could more forcibly describe the gathering of the dispersed people from all quarters of the globe, in order that they might again possess the land promised as an everlasting inheritance to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. It is impossible to apply these words to the restoration of the Jews from Babylon; they plainly refer not to their being held as captives in one particular country, but as being scattered through all lands, as they have been for many centuries, and still continue to be at the present day.

Let me now refer you to a passage in the 36th chapter of Ezekiel, which points most clearly to the general dispersion of the Jews: "And I scattered them among the heathen, and they were dispersed through the countries; according to their way, and according to their doings, I judged them." No one will for a moment dispute the fact that God has literally accomplished what He here declares. It is no merely figurative punishment that is meant, but a *literal* dispersion among the nations, as a consequence of sin. Now, mark the 24th verse of the same chapter—"For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own

land." See also verse 28—"And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God." Now, we uphold that if we are to understand one part of the chapter as literal, when it refers to the dispersion, we are bound by every fair rule of criticism to accept that part also as literal which refers to their restoration. God threatens to disperse them through all nations—He has fulfilled that threat to the letter. He also promises to collect them again out of the countries where they have been driven, and restore them to their own land. We are, therefore, bound to look for the strictly literal fulfilment of the promise.

Having thus, as we believe, established the literal restoration of the Jews to Palestine as a revealed truth, we shall now endeavor to prove, from Scripture, that they will be attacked there by a confederacy of anti-christian powers, and that when their enemies seem to be on the very point of triumphing, the Lord Jesus Christ himself will suddenly appear, and turn the tide of battle in their favor, utterly destroy their enemies, and inaugurate the period of millennial blessedness upon earth. In the 14th chapter of the Book of Zechariah we find the following remarkable prophecy: "Behold the day of the Lord cometh, and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee. For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city.—Then shall the Lord go forth, and fight against those nations, as when He fought in the day of battle. And His feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east." Then, farther on, in the 12th verse, we read—"And thou shalt be the plague wherewith the Lord will smite all the people that have fought against Jerusalem: their flesh shall consume away while they stand upon their feet, and their eyes shall consume away in their holes, and their tongue shall consume away in their mouth." Here you have it clearly proved that, immediately before the Second Advent, there will be a gathering together of the [illegible] earth to the battle of the great day of the Lord God Almighty, [illegible] after having been reinstated in Palestine, will be attacked, and [illegible] almost defeated, when, suddenly, the combatants will stand aghast at the loud shrill blast of the archangel's trumpet. Christ himself will appear in great glory in the clouds of heaven, and utterly destroy the enemies of His people. "Behold He cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him, and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him."

If you now read carefully the 19th and 20th chapters of the Book of Revelation, you will see that this fearful contest is described as taking place imme-

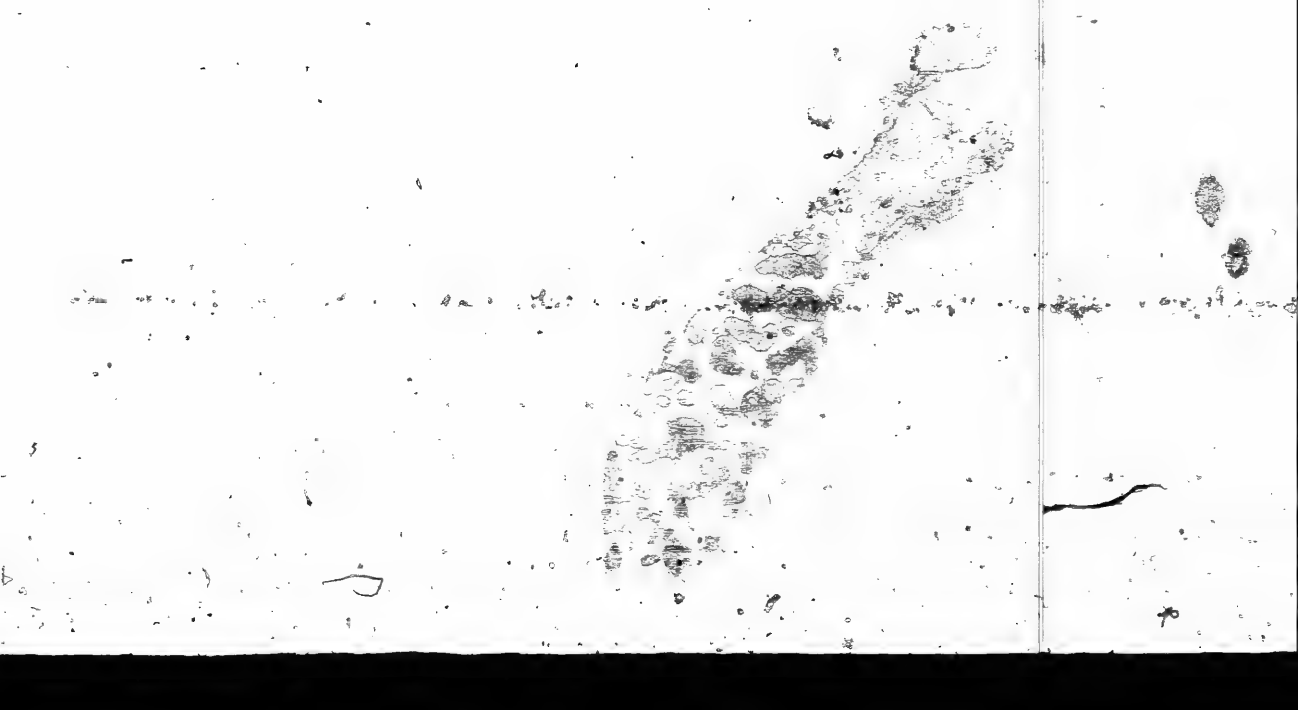
diately before the millennial period. St. John sees a magnificent vision of a warrior mounted on a white horse, and clothed in a vesture dipped in blood. We are not left to conjecture who this warrior is, for His name is given—"The Word of God," that is, Christ. (See St. John's Gospel, chap. i.) He is described as utterly defeating His enemies, who are cast into a lake of fire, burning with brimstone.

It may be, brethren, that this terrible advent will occur in our own days. I do not wish to dogmatize, but I have read with care, and with the most intense interest, different opinions upon the interpretation of those prophecies that point to the period of the Second Advent, and I shall state some of these opinions in the evening. Meanwhile, I may safely say that there is at least a possibility of the event occurring within the experience of the present generation. There is, therefore, in this very doctrine of the Second Advent, a strong motive for our endeavoring to prepare, not only ourselves, but those near and dear to us by the ties of blood and affection, for meeting our God.

There is an awfulness and solemnity in the thought that we must die, and even with all the support that the Gospel affords by its promises of a happy immortality beyond the grave, we shrink with instinctive dread from the icy touch of Death, the King of Terrors. But it is even still more startling to reflect that while we are in full health and strength of body and mind—while we are actively engaged in the business of daily life—while nature wears her usual appearance, and the sun is shining brightly in the firmament, we may suddenly hear the sound of the trumpet, and be surrounded with all the majesties of the Advent of Christ. How are you prepared, dear friends, for that awful scene? Let conscience speak. Were the shrill trumpet-peal to roll along the firmament to-day, do you feel prepared for the summons? Would Christ find you in the ranks of His friends or of His foes?

And there is a strong motive for you who are parents, to labor earnestly that your children may be early taught to know the Lord. You yourselves may have passed away from time to eternity, when, amidst the rushings of ten thousand squadrons of mighty angels, and the crash of dissolving elements, the Son of God will appear in power and in might, to take terrible vengeance on His foes; but the children whom you love with a depth and intensity that no words can express, may be dwelling upon earth; and should you neglect the interests of their immortal souls now, they may then be without a refuge from the wrath of their Judge. Oh! may God grant you all grace to labor not only to prepare yourselves, but also all near and dear to you, for the second coming of our Redeemer.

You know that there is but one way of preparation—"Believe on the Lord



Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." If you possess that precious faith, you will be enabled to repent sincerely of all your past sins, and also to forsake them, for there can be no genuine repentance of sin if that sin is afterwards wilfully persevered in. Come to Christ as you are. It matters not how deep and how many may be the stains of guilt upon your soul. His blood can cleanse from *all* sin—there is no limit to its cleansing any more than to its saving power. But remember, that *now* is your day of grace—*now* the day of your merciful visitation. To-day, Christ addresses you in the language of earnest entreaty; He beseeches you to flee from the wrath to come, for He is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come unto Him and have everlasting life. Oh! you who are still impenitent, let me press upon you the brief but solemn question, "Why will you die?" Christ has shed His precious blood to open up a way by which you may escape eternal death, and lay hold of eternal life. He encourages you to come to Him by the blessed promise, "Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out." Then, by all the solemnities of His Second Advent—by the fearful and unearthly sound of the last trumpet, that will one day fall upon your ears—by all the hopes you cherish of attaining the joys of heaven, and avoiding the miseries of hell—by the very uncertainty that hangs around, not only the day of your death, but also the coming of our Lord, I beseech you to accept the salvation which is freely offered to you in the Gospel, by fleeing to the Cross of Christ as your only refuge.

THE VOICE OF PROPHECY.

Part II.

UNFULFILLED PROPHECY.

"He which testifieth these things, saith: Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so come, Lord Jesus.—REVELATIONS, chap. xxii. 20.

We reviewed in the morning some of the things that are here stated as being testified by Christ. We showed you that a series of events, deeply affecting the history of the Christian Church, had been foretold in symbolical language by the Evangelist, and that the course of these events extended from the period at which he wrote in the first century of the Christian era, to the times in which we ourselves live. We then went on to consider some of the leading future events that are disclosed in the Book of Revelation, stating that these embraced the restoration of the Jews to Palestine—the circumstances relating to the second advent of Christ—the first resurrection, or resurrection of the saints—the millennium period of a thousand years—the final struggle of Satan—and the general winding up of the affairs of the world at the day of judgment.

The first of these topics, viz.: the restoration of the Jews to Palestine, we have already briefly discussed, and we now go on to state some of the leading points connected with the Second Advent of our Saviour. The first object that demands our inquiry, is the period indicated in Holy Scripture, at which the advent will take place. Now, there are several prophecies that bear upon this question. We shall select the one that we have most recently considered in our weekly lectures, that contained in the last chapter of the Book of Daniel, and expressed in the following words: "And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days. Blessed is he that waiteth and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days." "But go thou thy way till the end be, for thou shalt rest and stand in thy lot in the end of the days." Now you will remember that, in the 7th chapter of

his prope cies, Daniel gives an account of four beasts that rose out of the sea, representing, as we showed in detail in the course of our lectures, the four great empires of the Chaldeans, the Medes and Persians, the Greeks and the Romans. I shall quote the description given of the last, as it is to it we are now referring, verse 7, "And behold a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth, it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it; and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it, and it had ten horns. I considered the horns, and behold, there came up among them another little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots; and, behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth, speaking great things." The 23rd, 24th and 25th verses give an explanation of this figure, stating that a kingdom was meant which should devour the whole earth, and that out of this kingdom ten others should arise, and after that one more, whose character is fully given. The words are as follows: "And the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise, and another shall rise after them; and he shall be diverse from the first, and he shall subdue three kings. And he shall speak great words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and think to change times and laws; and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time. But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion to consume and to destroy it unto the end."

The description of the original kingdom agrees exactly with the character of the Roman Empire, whose career of universal conquest is well represented by the "stamping," "devouring" and "breaking in pieces," ascribed to the beast; the ten horns, representing ten kingdoms, point to the ten nations into which that empire was divided on its breaking up; while the littl horn, if we consider what is attributed to it in the vision, is evidently intended to point to the Papacy, which has indeed "spoken against the Most High," in putting the decrees of fallible men in the place of the oracles of God—and has "worn out the saints of the Most High," by the many bloody persecutions that stain the pages of her history. Observe, also, that the period assigned by the prophet for the duration of this anti-christian power—a time, times, and the dividing of time, that is, one year, two years and half a year, or three years and a half, equal to 1260 prophetic days, or literal years—agrees exactly with the period laid down for its existence in the Book of Revelation. We therefore conclude, that when the angel speaks in the last chapter of the setting up of the "abomination that maketh desolate," he refers to the rise of the Papal Apostacy, and when he says that the man will be blessed who

sees the end of 1335 prophetic days, or literal years, from that period, and that Daniel himself should *rest* until the end of the days, and then "stand in his lot," we conclude that he points to a time when Daniel shall rise again from the grave, and enter into the enjoyment of the blessedness of the period referred to in the Book of Revelation as the thousand years during which Christ will reign with His saints upon the regenerated earth.

The next point for our consideration, is the date at which the Papal supremacy may fairly be said to have commenced. You will at once see that this is a point of the most vital importance, for if *it* be correctly settled, we have only to add the 1335 years of the prophecy to the date in question, and we will arrive at the very period at or near which the present dispensation will be closed, and the Advent of Christ will take place. We shall now proceed to state three different periods that have been assigned as the true date of the establishment of the Papal power, and show the result in each case in so far as the date of the Advent is concerned.

The first period is the year of our Lord, 532, when the Bishop of Rome was acknowledged as head of the church by the Emperor Justinian. This occurred under John II., reckoned as the 55th Bishop of Rome. The circumstances that led to this were as follows:—The monks of Constantinople, differing from Justinian in an article of faith, applied to the Bishop of Rome to decide the case in their favor. Justinian also referred his view of the question to the Bishop, sending him at the same time a very valuable present, and acknowledging him as having a right to give a final decision. Now, if we admit that this is, in reality, the date of the beginning of the Papal power, we have only to add the 1335 years of the prophecy to it, and we arrive at the period indicated as the close of the present dispensation—1335 added to 532, make 1867; that is, according to this view, in seven years from the present time we may look for the Second Advent of Christ. I need not say that some of the most celebrated students of prophecy are strongly inclined to admit this period. Mr. Irvine thus writes: "And at the end of the 1335 days, or in the year 1867, which is 42 years from the time I now write, the period of blessedness shall have begun, and the resurrection of the righteous, whatever that be, shall have taken place." This date of the rise of the Papacy is held by Elliot, Newton and Meade; and the well-known Dr. Cumming, in giving his preference to the same date, seems strongly inclined to believe that the millennial period will commence at the period indicated by Mr. Irvine, in the foregoing extract. In his "Great Tribulation," page 21, second series (New York Edition), he says: "I have given these extracts from competent authorities, all coming to one conclusion, that the seventh thousand year of the world is to be its millennial rest; and I have shown you, that if the chronology of Mr. Fines Clinton be correct, *and I*

are satisfied it is correct, we are, at this very moment, within eight years of the close of the sixth thousand year, and, therefore, if our dates be right, within eight years of the commencement of what all these writers hope is the everlasting rest, the dawn of heaven, the millennial blessedness of the people of God—when all tears shall be dried—when all sorrows shall cease—when death shall die, and when Christ shall shine before His ancients gloriously, and this world shall enjoy that rest which has been foretold by prophets, celebrated by poets, and anticipated by saints, and declared by an apostle to be the Sabbath-rest that remaineth for the people of God."

Should this view of the prophecy be a correct one, we may well be startled at the nearness of that period that must produce so great a change in the destinies of the world, and induced to examine more seriously into our spiritual state—to see to it that we are preparing to meet either our own death, or the coming of our Lord to inaugurate the period of millennial blessedness; by earnest faith in the efficacy of that blood that He shed to open up a fountain for sin and uncleanness—a faith, whose genuine character will be proved, by our being enabled not only to repent of our past sins, but also to forsake them in time to come, and, in the beautiful language of one of the Collects of our Church, "So to pass through things temporal that finally we miss not the things which are eternal."

The second period assigned as the origin of the Papacy, and therefore the starting-point of the calculation, is the year of our Lord 606, when the Emperor Phocas made a decree confirming the grant of Justinian. Boniface III when made bishop of Rome, induced Justinian to revoke the decree, settling the title of Universal Bishop on the Bishop of Constantinople, and to pass another one conferring it on himself and his successors. If we therefore add this date, 606, to the 1335 years of the prophecy, it will bring us to A.D. 1941, or 81 years from the present time as the period of the advent.

The last of the dates which I propose to notice, is one which will throw the period of the advent still farther back. It is the year of our Lord 752, when the celebrated Pepin, King of France, raised the Pope to the rank of a temporal prince, by conferring upon him the three states called the Exarchate of Ravenna, the Pentapolis, and the Dukedom of Rome. It is argued that this is properly the beginning of the Papacy, inasmuch as the spiritual and temporal power is here for the first time combined—and that this combination is the fulfilment of that portion of the prophecy of Daniel, relating to the little horn in the head of the beast, plucking up three of the ten original horns—that is, the Papacy absorbing three kingdoms or states to form the basis of its temporal authority. If this is the true date of the Papacy, the result will be as fol-

lows: 752 added to 1335, equal to 2087, as the date of the advent, or 227 years from the present time.

I have thus laid before you the limits within which, according to the means at our disposal for interpreting the prophecies of God's Word, the present dispensation will end, and the millennium, or reign of Christ upon earth, will commence.

You will observe that the uncertainty does not lie in the prophecy, but in the imperfect means that we have for its interpretation. Were there no ground to dispute the starting point—that is, the period when the Papacy obtained its supremacy—there would be none for questioning our power to indicate the very year in which the Advent will take place. And yet this very uncertainty agrees best with many declarations made in God's Word regarding our ignorance of the period, and the suddenness with which it will surprise the inhabitants of the earth. In St. Mark's Gospel, chap. xiii. 32-37, Christ says: "But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father. Take ye heed, watch and pray, for ye know not when the time is. For the Son of Man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch. Watch ye, therefore, for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cock crowing, or in the morning; lest, coming suddenly, he find you sleeping." Again, in 1st Thess. v. 2, we read: "The day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night;" that is, secretly and without the knowledge of the inmates of the house. But, although the exact time is hid from our view, it is clear that the voice of prophecy is continually warning us of its approach; and there is every reason to believe that the dates already given include the limits within which it will take place. We cannot, indeed, presume to assert that either the first period of 1867, or the second of 1941, is proved to be the one in question, yet some of the most eminent expositors point us either to the one or the other.

We now go on to consider some of the circumstances disclosed by Holy Scripture, as attending the Second Advent. The first of these is the Resurrection of the Saints—that is, of those who have died as true believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. The proposition which we shall now endeavour to prove from Scripture is this: That, although both the righteous and the wicked will rise from the grave, they will not do so at the same time; but that the righteous will rise at the Second Advent, and reign with Christ during the millennium period; while the wicked will remain in their graves to the end of that period, and be raised at the day of judgment. Startling as this proposi-

tion may appear to be, we do not ask you to believe it on any other grounds that what we can adduce from the Word of God. If the passages we bring forward prove it to be a Scriptural doctrine, you are bound to assent to its truth, however much it may disagree with the ideas you have previously formed; but if you consider that the testimony of Scripture does not authorize such a belief, you are then equally bound to reject it.

The first passage we shall refer to, is that contained in the Book of Revelation, chap. xx. The first three verses of this chapter relate to the binding of Satan during the millennium. The 4th verse states: "And I saw thrones, and they that sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them; and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the Word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. *This is the first resurrection.* Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection; on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years." Does not the Evangelist, in this passage, distinctly state that the saints will rise at the beginning of the millennium, and reign with Christ until its close? You will observe that the happiness and character of the saints are given in the words, "*Blessed* and *holy* is he that hath part in the first resurrection;" and we may compare this expression with the words addressed to Daniel in the prophecy already quoted, "Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days," that is, as we showed you before, to the beginning of the millennial period. What does the sacred writer mean by the following words: "But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished;" if not that the wicked (i.e. "the rest of the dead," those who are *not* the saints) will remain in their graves during the period that Christ and His people are enjoying the state of millennial blessedness? There is no way of evading the meaning of these plain and forcible words of Scripture except by supposing, as some do, that the first resurrection is merely a figurative expression, denoting the resurrection of those principles which the saints professed on earth, and for which they, in many cases, sacrificed their lives. But there is a fatal objection in the passage to this view. You will observe that the final resurrection, or resurrection of the wicked, is spoken of in the same terms as that of the just. If then, the one part of the sentence is figurative, the other must be figurative also—that is, according to this view, there will be no resurrection of the wicked, but only one of their evil principles—an infer-

ence which I need not remind you is plainly at variance with many portions of the Word of God. See 1st Cor. xv. &c.

In reading the commentary of Barnes, on this part of Revelation, I was struck with the extraordinary style of argument he adopts in defence of the figurative sense in which he says we ought to regard the expression, "first resurrection." He says: "It is admitted on all hands that this doctrine, if contained in the Scriptures at all, is found in this one passage only. It is not pretended that there is in any other place a direct affirmation that this will literally occur, nor would the advocates of that opinion undertake to show that it is fairly implied in any other part of the Bible. But it is strange, not to say improbable, that the doctrine of the literal resurrection of the righteous a thousand years before the wicked, should be announced in one passage only."

The two points of this objection are, first, that the passage in question (Rev. xx. 4–6) is the only one in the Scriptures in which the doctrine of the first resurrection is either plainly stated, or from which it may be fairly implied; and second, that it is improbable that such a doctrine would be contained in only one passage. Now, if we are to infer from his second objection, that we are to doubt or disbelieve a doctrine that is only stated *once* in Scripture, what becomes of the apostles declaration, that "*all* Scripture is given by inspiration of God?" If a doctrine is stated to us once on the authority of inspiration, are we not as much bound to believe it as if it were stated by the same author a thousand times? Then, again, we must bear in mind that the Book of Revelation is the last of the sacred canon, and that it treats of many subjects that are not introduced in other parts of God's Word. Perhaps the argument may appear in a clearer light by using an illustration. There are facts stated by St. John, in his Gospel, that none of the other three Evangelists allude to. Are we to reject these facts because they are only stated *once*, and by one sacred writer? I do not think that the opponents of the doctrine of the first resurrection will venture to carry their argument to such an absurd length, and yet if it applies to the one case, it does also to the other. But, in addition to this, we deny altogether that the passage in Revelation is the only one in which the doctrine of the first resurrection is taught. Thus, in the 11th verse of the 3rd chapter of St. Paul's Epistle to the Phillipians, the apostle, speaking of himself, says: "If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead." Now, if there is but one general resurrection of the dead at the day of judgment, and if all, both good and bad, must rise at that time, what can the apostle mean by speaking as if there were a possibility of his missing that resurrection? If we look at the Greek of the sentence carefully, we will find the exact translation to be—"If by any means I might attain unto the [resur-

fection *from amongst* the dead," not "unto the resurrection of the dead," as it is rendered in our translation. We appeal to you if this expression of the apostle's can have any definite meaning, on the supposition that there is but one general resurrection of the just and the wicked; but taken in connection with the doctrine of the first resurrection laid down in the Book of Revelation, his meaning is perfectly clear. It is as if he said, "Oh! that I may be among that blessed company that will rise first and enjoy with Christ the state of millennial blessedness—may I not be left to lie in the grave with the wicked after the saints have risen to meet their triumphant Lord!"

The next passage to which we desire to direct your attention is that contained in 1st Thes. iv. 14–17—"For if we believe that Jesus died, and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus, will God bring with Him. For this we say unto you, by the Word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent (that is, *go before*) them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God, *and the dead in Christ shall rise first.* Then we which are alive, and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord." Now, keep in view the several points brought out in these verses. 1st.—There will be many of God's people alive upon the earth at the time of the Advent, and God only knows, dear friends, but some of us may be among the number. 2nd.—The dead bodies of the saints shall rise from their graves, and being re-united to their glorified spirits, whom Christ will bring with Him from those abodes of happiness where they have been residing since their departure from this world, they will, along with the living saints, be caught up into the air to meet their Lord.

Let us now refer to the 15th chap. of St. Paul's first Epistle to the Corinthians —that magnificent proof of the resurrection that our Church directs us to read over the coffin of her departed members. You will observe that the Apostle, throughout the whole chapter, is alluding to the resurrection of believers in Christ. The resurrection of the wicked is elsewhere proved in Scripture, and it forms no part of his object to refer to it in the course of his argument in this chapter. In the 51st and 52nd verses he says: "Behold, I show you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall *all be changed*, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump (for the trumpet shall sound), and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed;" that is, the children of God who are alive at the Advent of Christ, will be suddenly changed, both with respect to the body and the soul, in such a way as to assimilate them to the saints who rise with their glorified bodies, and have them inhabited

by their purified souls that Christ will bring with Him at His Advent; and comparing Scripture with Scripture, I would infer that the change experienced by Enoch and Elijah, at their translation, to fit them for the glories of heaven, is exactly the one that every child of God must undergo who shall be alive at the period of the Advent.

I think enough has been advanced on this point to prove that the first resurrection, or resurrection of the saints, is a doctrine clearly set forth in God's Word, not only in the Book of Revelation, where a dispute may arise as to what language is figurative, and what literal, but in other parts of the New Testament, where objections of this kind cannot possibly be entertained. And now let us pause and meditate a moment on what is involved in these important truths. You who are believers in Christ may well draw much comfort and encouragement from the statement. I have shown you that the Advent *may* occur at a period within the possible experience of nearly every one who hears me, and, at all events, that, taking even the remotest date, it cannot be very far distant. There are, therefore, two things, of one of which you may be sure—either that you will never die at all, but live to experience the delightful and mysterious change that will pass over the body of living saints when Christ appears, "when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal immortality;" or, if you must die, that you will not have long to rest in the cold and silent grave. Your souls will not be long in the separate state, waiting for the resurrection of your bodies; the sleep of the grave will appear to you but the rest of a short summer's night, to be speedily followed by the dawning of that bright morning that shall usher in a cloudless and eternal day. Well may you exclaim, believer, in the prospect of this blessed destiny, "Oh! Death, where is thy sting? oh! Grave, where is thy victory?" Oh! what a spectacle will our churchyards and cemeteries present on that day? Some graves will burst open at the sound of the trumpet, and the buried saints shall rise rejoicingly to meet their coming Lord. But on other graves the grass will still grow green until it is shrank and shrivelled up in the general conflagration. Family graves will be opened, and those members of the family who died in Christ will have their ashes separated from their kindred dust, and, starting from the tomb as renewed and glorified bodies, will leave the remains of those dear to them on earth, to moulder until the summons comes for the last judgment. You know how common is the wish among the members of a family to be laid in one grave. Whence this wish? Is it not because we are taught that the dead will rise again, and that there is an instinctive desire that all should rise together? Aye, and so all *shall* rise together, and be united again, if all die in the faith of a common Lord, but not otherwise. What a lesson is

here read to you who are parents! If you desire that the children whom you love should start with you from the sleep of death, at the Advent of your Redeemer—if you wish that you should be re-united in that land where sorrow and parting and tears are forever unknown, then I beseech you to strive to lead them to Christ as their Saviour now, while they are in the land of the living and the place of hope. Oh! remember that "as the tree falls, so it lies"—if they leave this world unforgiven, there is no hope of mercy for them in the next—nothing but a fearful experience of God's fiery indignation through the endless ages of eternity. It is with reference to the unalterable nature of our state at the hour of death, that it is declared in the last chapter of the Book of Revelation, "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still, and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still, and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still, and he that is holy, let him be holy still." If you die unjustified by the blood of Christ, you must remain so throughout eternity—if you go down to the grave, or meet our Lord at His Advent, with your heart impure and unchanged by the operation of the Holy Spirit, you cannot inherit the kingdom of God; but if you are righteous at death—that is, clothed with the spotless robe of Christ's righteousness—then you will be righteous, and holy, and happy in the presence of God for ever and ever.

The next important point for our consideration is the purifying process, which this world will undergo, in the general conflagration foretold in Scripture. As far as I can judge, the Scriptures appear to indicate that this purifying process will take place at the commencement of the millennial period, and not at its close, and that it is for this object that the saints will be caught up into the air to meet their Redeemer. The principal support of this doctrine lies in the words of St. Peter, chap. iii. 2nd Epistle. In verses 3–6, he says, "Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of His coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the Creation. For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God, the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water, whereby the world that then was being overflowed with water, perished. But the heavens and the earth which are now, by the same word are kept in store reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men"—then in verse 10, "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be burnt up."

Here you will observe that the apostle draws a comparison between the

deluge in Noah's time, and the burning of the earth at the "day of the Lord." We are told that the scoffers asked tauntingly for signs of the coming deluge and refused to believe the preacher, because the sun continued to shine as brightly in the heavens as he had done in the days of their fathers. It is remarkable that Christ himself makes use of the same illustration, stating "that they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and knew not till the flood came and took them away. So shall also the coming of the Son of Man be."—Matthew xxiv. 38,39. It has been said that St. Peter alludes to a *figurative*, and not a literal burning of the earth. We reply that such a supposition sets at defiance every fair rule of criticism, inasmuch as he draws a parallel between the circumstances of the deluge and those attending the conflagration. There were scoffers in Noah's days—need I say that we meet multitudes of the same class in the times in which we live?—men who will sneer at any amount of proof from God's word, if that word is contrary to their own wishes or the indulgence of their sins. There were warnings given in Noah's time, for he was commanded to exhort the people to repentance while the ark was building; and assuredly we have warnings enough afforded to us both in the pages of Holy Scripture and in the signs of the times in which we live. Take, for instance, the fulfilment of prophecy, with respect to the Mahometan and Papal powers. We see Turkey growing weaker every day—politicians feel assured that her empire is rapidly hastening to decay, and that she must soon cease to exist as a separate power. And this consummation, so devoutly to be wished, will have the effect of breaking down the chief barrier to the return of God's ancient people, the Jews, to dwell in the land promised as an everlasting inheritance to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. With respect to the Papacy, there is an universal impression on men's minds that its temporal power will soon be crushed. The successes of Garibaldi, resulting in the liberation of a great part of Italy—that land so long down-trodden by despotic power—have given a blow to the Papacy, that it is highly improbable it can ever recover. Now, we believe that prophecy points to the ruin of these two powers as an event that will immediately precede the advent, and we can hence gather a solemn warning that the day of the Lord is not far distant. The expressions used by St. Peter, with reference to the burning of the earth, are strong and pointed, "The elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also, and all the works that are therein shall be burnt up." Even suppose we had no clear proof from Scripture that a literal conflagration was meant, the discoveries of scientific men assure us that at a certain distance below its surface, the earth is one mass of liquid fire—so intense is the heat which prevails; and it will, therefore, be as easy for God to set loose this fiery flood upon the surface of the

globe, as it was for Him to open the fountains of the great deep in Noah's time, and drown the world in a deluge of water. With these facts before us, it appears to me to be altogether absurd to suppose St. Peter to allude to any thing but a *literal* burning of the earth—for from the way in which he draws the parallel, we are forced to the conclusion that the flood of water and the flood of fire are either *both* literal, or *both* figurative; we know that the deluge literally came upon the earth, and we therefore conclude that the conflagration referred to will become a strict and literal fact.

The object of this visitation appears to be to prepare the earth for being the dwelling-place of Christ and His saints. We know that the ground was cursed on account of Adam's sin—the curse will then be removed, and just as surely as the present state of the world is adapted to our wants in the mortal and imperfect state in which we now exist, so surely will the "new heaven and the new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness," be fully fitted for that state of perfect happiness, and freedom from pain and sorrow, that the redeemed will enjoy in millennial blessedness.

We now come to speak of that gorgeous description of the happiness of the saints that enriches the Book of Revelation. We stay not to comment upon the "street of pure gold as it were transparent glass"—the crystal river or the pearly gates of that beautiful city—the new Jerusalem—that St. John saw descending from heaven like a bride adorned for her husband; we will not even dwell upon that magnificent anthem of heavenly praise that is raised by the voices of ten thousand times ten thousand redeemed saints, and the sound of which, though sweet as that of many waters, is yet louder than the roaring thunder. We would rather seek to fix your thoughts upon the single description—"And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away."

"There shall be no more death."—Take comfort, you who have stood by the death-bed of those dearer to you than life, and have hung over the wasted form of the departing one in an agony of grief and sorrow that almost rent your heart in twain—there are no death-beds in the millennial state—there is no disease there—there are no parting scenes there, but friends who die in Christ shall be united in glory, and enjoy a purer communion than that afforded in this vale of tears—a communion as perfect in its happiness as it will be endless in its duration. The wife and the husband—the brother and the sister—the parent and the child—if they have died in Christ, shall be re-united in that happy land never again to part.

"A few short years of evil past,
We reach that happy shore,
Where death-divided friends at last
Shall meet to part no more."

There shall be neither "sorrow" nor "crying" there. Listen to these precious words, you whom affliction seems to claim for its own upon earth—you who have your secret griefs to weep over, and down whose cheeks the bitter tears often flow, as you think of the hardness of your lot, and the greatness of the trials that God has assigned as your portion on earth. There is consolation for you in the precious promise, "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." Oh! this corruption must have put on incorruption, and this mortal, immortality, before we can fully understand all the happiness that is included in the description of the New Jerusalem, when it is said that "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away."

And now, dear friends, in conclusion, let me urge you to improve the consideration of this subject by an increased earnestness in your preparation for another world. Oh! beloved, see to it that you are in Christ—see to it that your course is safe for eternity. What will it profit you if you gain the whole world and loose your own immortal souls? You who are true followers of Christ, blessed are you beyond all that human language can express—for even should your Lord's coming be delayed till you have gone to your rest in the grave, the day of your death will be a happy one. When the shadows of evening are gathering around you—when your heart grows faint at the cold touch of the King of Terrors—when the last sigh is heaving from your breast, and the last breath is passing from your lips—when your immortal spirit is quivering ere it is launched from time into eternity, you will feel the everlasting arms of your Redeemer around and underneath you, and as you enter the dark rolling waters of the River of Death, that flow between you and the Heavenly Canaan, your feet will be firmly planted on the Rock of Ages, and you will pass in safety to the farther side, when the pearly gates of the city will be opened to admit you, and you will tread its golden streets—and, clothed in a blood-washed robe, with a crown of gold upon your head, and palms of victory in your hands—you shall raise your voice in unison with the heavenly choir in singing the praises of the Lamb that was slain.